

National
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Christian
Communicators
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AUG 24 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary



August 21, 2007

The Honorable Kevin Martin
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Carriage of Digital Television Broadcast Signals (CS Docket No. 98-120)

Dear Chairman Martin:

I write today to express strong support for the robust viewability requirement contained in the Commission's Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking relating to the carriage of digital television broadcast signals. This issue is of significant interest to the community of Christian broadcasters and programmers comprising the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB).

The many valuable benefits of the transition to digital television have been widely communicated to television viewers. Their sincerely held expectation is that the digital television transition will be an added-value proposition – not one which results in the material degradation or the actual disappearance of favorite programs.

NRB considers the preservation of must-carry obligations and the requirement that all cable subscribers be able to view all local broadcast television stations that have elected mandatory carriage to be a substantial public interest obligation. To do any less would make cable system operators the arbiters of which content receives favored treatment and which does not, substantially eroding the free marketplace of ideas and consumer choice.

Furthermore, the failure to provide for these protections in the post-analog world would cause significant hardship for religious and other non-profit broadcasters, making it difficult to fulfill their educational mission.

NRB strongly supports the Commission's proposal in Subsection B, Paragraph 17, which would ensure that all subscribers can continue to view their favorite programs when the digital television transition is complete.

Sincerely,

Frank Wright, Ph.D.
President & CEO

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